Summer 1998 ◆ Number 16

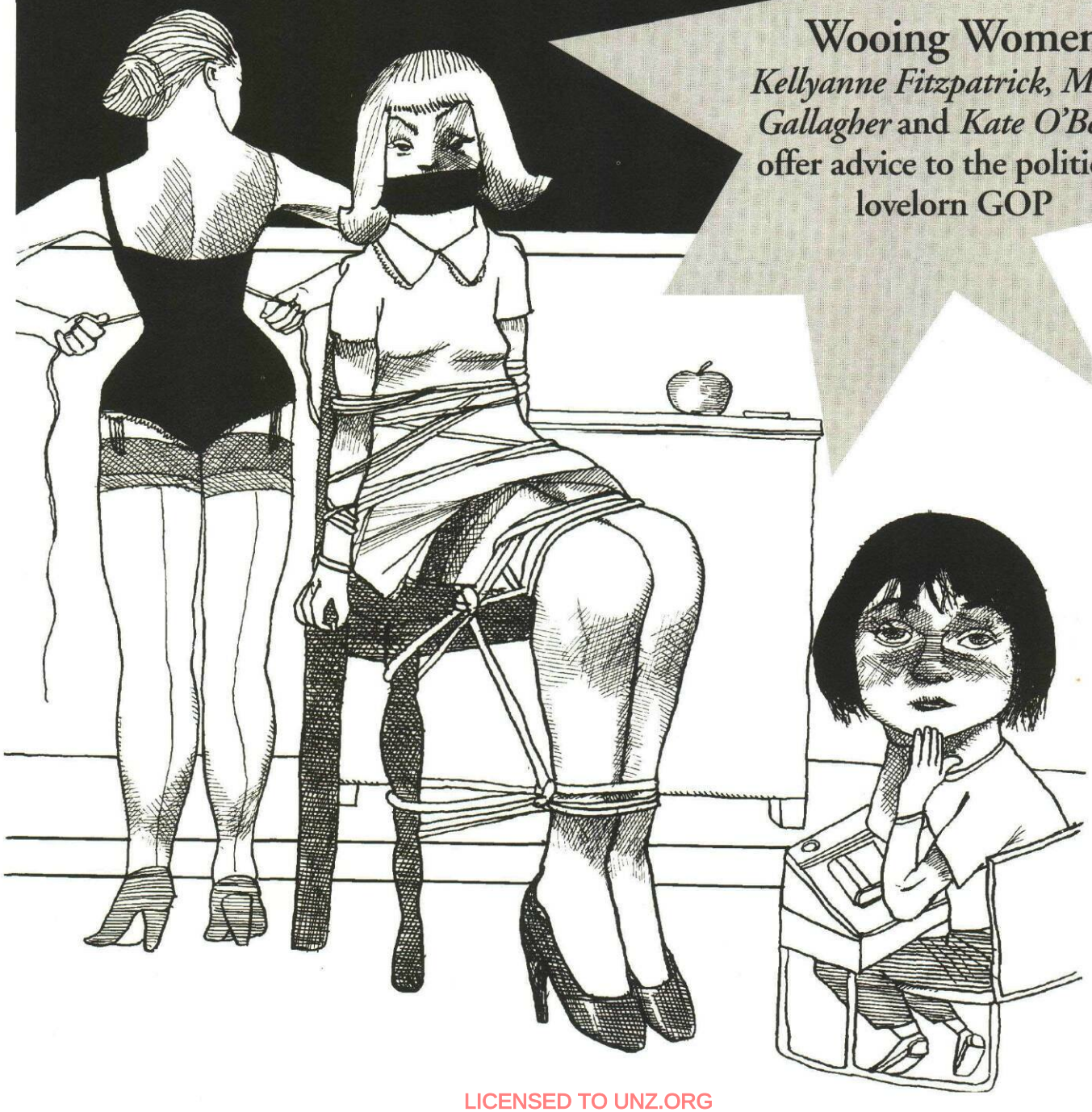
The Women's Quarterly

Sex and Bondage 101

Candace de Russy on the new academic frontier

Wooing Women

Kellyanne Fitzpatrick, Maggie Gallagher and *Kate O'Beirne* offer advice to the politically lovelorn GOP



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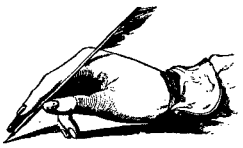
Diary



The No Fun Mum

My six-year-old daughter came home from camp one day this summer and announced that her group would be performing the disco song "Macho Man" by the Village People for the camp's annual "lip sync" show.

"Mummy, what does 'macho' mean?" she asked, as we walked home from the bus.

"What is a 'lip sync' show?" I replied, instead of answering. She told me that every group in the camp had been assigned a rock song and that they were to perform it on stage, mouthing the words. Parents were invited to attend this MTV-like extravaganza.

Well, I thought to myself, we've come a long way in camp entertainment since "Hiawatha."

"You'll be there, right?" she asked tentatively, noticing the expression on my face darkening by the second.

"Mm," I mumbled.

The minute we got home I phoned the camp director. Since when did having little kids act out rock videos become a camp activity? I demanded. Were there *no* other kinds of theater or music the camp could think of for its annual show?

The director was pleasant and polite, but taken completely off guard by my complaint. They did the show every year, he explained. It was always good fun. The kids got to "act silly" and "express their creativity." And parents hadn't complained in the past.

I thanked him for listening and hung up feeling—as I often do after I'm moved to protest something—that I'd just been marked down as a mother who is NO FUN.

Oh well. I kept my daughter home from camp on the day of the show, and only later found out just how far the expression of creativity had gone: A blonde girl shimmied across the stage à la JonBenét Ramsey singing "Girls Just Want to Have Fun"; a little boy rivaled Elvis with his pelvic thrusts; and a group of ten- and eleven-year-olds acted out the shooting death of a notorious gangsta rapper.

A number of other parents apparently decided that they were NO FUN as well, and bombarded the camp with complaints. The director sent out a letter of apology, and promised the show would be reconsidered for the future.

But why was it considered in the first place? You hear a lot of grumbling about children these days—that they are callous, cynical, have short attention spans, are sexually precocious, and can't be interested in anything unless it comes on CD-ROM. But if this is true, what the little incident at my daughter's camp reminded me is that the problem originates less with children than with the adults charged with supervising them.

After all, it wasn't the children's idea to act out MTV. You could have lined up the same group of kids and had them perform highlights from *Showboat* if the counselors had been as enthusiastic about Jerome Kern as they were about Snoop Doggy Dogg. That's what made the spectacle so sad. Children today begin their lives no less innocently than they did a hundred years ago. As they grow up, they still look to the adults around them for cues about what is right and wrong, for what is acceptable and what is not. The little kids who were thrusting and vamping were doing exactly what they'd been told to do by adults whose judgment they trusted, and whose approval they sought. It's just that they were misled—as they so frequently are.

This has been one of the great shocks to me since I became a mother: the hostility of the adult world towards children. It no longer seems to view childhood as a wondrous, unself-conscious, innocent period worthy of its protection. I did not, for example, expect to be getting into arguments with my children over clothing, music, slang, and hairstyles until they were at least thirteen. But every day something comes up because those who are designing and marketing things to kids—whether it's toys, cartoons, movies, or the latest computer game—have decided that the best way to engage their audience is to speak to them as if they were cynical, rebellious, sexual mini-teenagers.

I've found myself having long debates with my daughter as to why it's not appropriate for her to dress like a Spice Girl. I've also had to explain why she can't pierce her ears, "bead" her hair, or wear sparkly blue nail polish except when playing dress-up. When shopping for clothes, I must constantly steer her away from displays of stretchy, Spandex, see-through, netted, luridly colored stuff that now constitutes Back-to-School wear and pray that her eyes alight on something plain—or plaid.

As for my four-year-old son, I've had to tell him that "Cool!" and "Awesome!" are fine words but only if used correctly ("Godzilla *is* awesome but he is *not* cool—he looks rather steamed up, actually"); that his baseball cap must always be pointing forwards, not backwards; and that classical music is not "stupid" just because it contains no electric guitars. When taking them to supposedly G-rated movies, I've had to suddenly distract them through unexpected, explicitly sexual trailers for adult films ("How 'bout some more gummy bears?!"), or am left feeling startled by the vulgarity and disdain for authority that a movie

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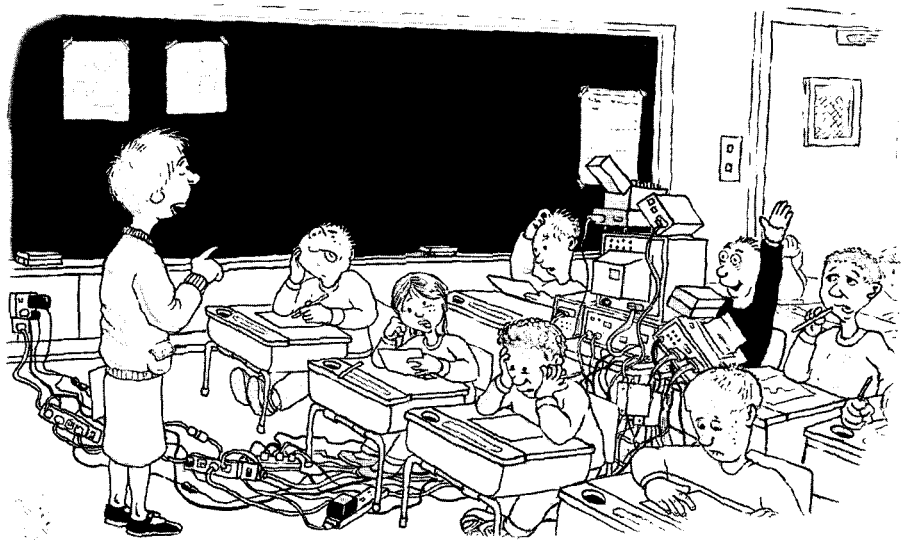

Cover by John Springs. Cartoon (above) by Charles Jaffé

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Sex and Bondage 101

Candace de Russy on the new academic frontier

4 *Drawing by John Springs*

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Women went to college, the old joke went, to get their "MRS." Now they can attend conferences in kinky sex and S&M, or take courses in lesbian and gay studies—and that is not a joke.

"Sex toys," "bondage sex," and even "pedophilia art" are topics now being taught in women's workshops, English literature classes, art departments, and in new centers of "lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender studies" at a growing number of respected colleges across the country.

At a conference held last May titled "Queer Publics/Queer Privates" at New York University, presenters discussed, among other subjects, "Sodomy, Miscegenation, and the Impossibility of Privacy," and the event featured a performance by a Los Angeles drag queen known as Vaginal Creme Davis. Professor José Esteban Muñoz had the honor of introducing Davis, whose performance was held at the illustrious Fales Library on the NYU campus. According to critic Roger Kimball, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, Muñoz mirthfully remarked on the "oddity of staging a 'terrorist drag' act that 'took no prisoners' in this quiet sanctum of humanistic scholarship." Muñoz went on to celebrate Davis as "truly a renaissance woman" who, in this "post-New Paltz era," had produced some of "the very best smut."

Muñoz was alluding to a similar conference called "Revolting Behavior: Challenges to Women's Sexual Freedom," held last fall at the New Paltz campus of the State University of New York (SUNY), which I attended as a SUNY trustee. This event involved a conspicuous display of "cutting-edge scholarship" in the field of lesbian sado-masochism, and drew the attention of media around the planet, including the CBS show "60 Minutes." The conference's main attractions were actually so sexually explicit that reporters held back from describing them in any detail on grounds of bad taste.

Here is, however, what actually occurred:

✖ The only slightly disguised recruitment of students and other attendees by a sadomasochistic organization named the Lesbian Sexual Mafia, whose members offered participants their personal cards and spoke alluringly of dungeons and "whip stripes," and of "Tops and Bottoms" (who inflict and receive pain respectively);

✖ Workshops exalting "butch" and "femme" lesbianism, anal sex, bisexuality, and female masturbation;

✖ A demonstration by the owner of a Manhattan sex shop of sex toys for women, including dildos bearing such labels as the "Tongue," "Miss Smoothy," "Kangaroo," "Lilith," and "Venus," as well as dildo harnesses, vibrators, anal beads, and bondage materials (all available for purchase);

✖ The distribution and sale of an array of pornography and "how-to" lesbian sex manuals, including works by the former prostitute and porn star Annie Sprinkle. There was also a pamphlet advising how to dispose of razor blades and similar instruments after "blood-letting sexual activities" (involving "cutting rituals, play and permanent piercings, and shavings");

✖ A performance by a stripper from a bisexual bathhouse, who simulated sexual acts including sadomasochistic anal sex with a character representing a Hasidic Jew, who was whipped on stage. (At one point the stripper also insulted—and then physically pounced upon—a known critic of the conference, Peter Shipley, who was sitting in the audience.)

In the subsequent controversy, the organizers defended the conference by saying that their workshop on lesbian sadomasochism, for instance, was intended to make such sexual activity "safe and sane," and that "S&M is where people are." "If you're going to do it," a member of the New Paltz women's studies faculty said, "this is the way to do it safely."

This defense was accepted by many in the media, including the *New York Times*, which touted the New Paltz campus as "the newest bastion of free speech." Supporters of the conference called critics "Cro-Magnons" and "goody-goodies," while still others accused trustees (like me) who opposed it of seeking to impose "censorship" and bringing about a "chilling effect" on SUNY campuses. Roger Bowen, president of SUNY-New Paltz, went so far as to dismiss critics as "philistines."

But these supporters needn't worry about a chilling effect. Sex studies are hot and have been for some time at a number of public and private colleges. Indeed some of the more worldly defenders of the conference paraded their boredom with the whole controversy, pronouncing the event a "ho-hum occurrence" and "business as usual."

And what a business it is. The sex movement in academia is in part a product of the latest transmutation of feminism, known as "sex-positive feminism." One of its leaders, Lisa Palac, a self-described "cyber-sex queen," is the author of *The Edge of the Bed: How Dirty Pictures Changed My Life*, and the producer of sexually explicit documentaries with titles such as *Cyborgasm 1 and 2*, and *Didn't Do It For Love*. Palac dubs her feminist precursors

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from the 1970s as "duh" feminists (meaning they demanded the most obvious sorts of things, such as equal pay for equal work). If Palac and her sister "pleasure activists" have their way, equal-opportunity feminists and anti-porn feminists, such as Andrea Dworkin, will soon be as antiquated as the corsets of yesteryear.

OR MAYBE NOT. For Dworkin and her allies oppose heterosexual sex, while "sex positive" feminists are the most extreme manifestations of the new "discipline" of "queer theory" curriculum that focuses on homosexual identity.

In practice, that means a porn queen who enrolled in an art class at the University of Southern California (USC) received credit—and accolades—from the university for her hard-core "performance art": Annabel Chong and two other women undressed and performed sex acts together for a class project, according to a recent report by Young America's Foundation. Not everyone was thrilled by the demonstration. Commented one student, Sandra Corsaro, "The bottom line is a girl got penetrated with two dildos for a grade."

Not to be outdone, the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) held a conference titled "Exposed!" in February, which featured Annie Sprinkle. The April issue of *Campus Report* noted that Sprinkle, in this performance, showed excerpts from her X-rated videos; one segment was called "Why Whores Are My Heroes." Among the workshops offered at UCSC was "*Danzine:* Sex Workers Start Their Own Publication and Organization," which consisted of a monologue by a prostitute named Teresa Dulce. Another was "Town, Gown, and Tea Rooms: The University and Public Homosexual Sex," led by UC-Berkeley researcher P. N. Fucella, who advocated his practice of anonymous bathroom (i.e., "tea room") sex.

Elsewhere, the 1997 annual conference of the Modern Language Association featured talks on "The Queer Child: The Pedagogue, the Pedophile, and the Masochist," as part of a session that focused on homosexuality in children's literature and homosexual children in adult literature. And last November, the formerly prim Sarah Lawrence College held a "Sleaze Week," during which students were invited to a presentation on PONY (Prostitutes of New York) by the editor of a publication called *Whores and Other Feminists*. Students were exhorted to "tighten [their] strap-ons" and "put on [their] favorite g-string" for a dance complete with "whatever turns you on."

IF IT'S "TRANSGENDERED" sex you're interested in, well, you can learn about that too. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that "transgendered scholars" are increasingly making their presence known to their students. The term "transgendered" refers to people who live as the opposite sex; they may have had a sex-change operation or simply "cross-dress." One cross-dressing philosophy professor, Michael Gilbert of York University in Toronto, dons wig and makeup before his lecture on gender identity. Another professor, C. Jacob Hale of California State University, Northridge, had her breasts removed and takes male hormones; her self-described academic discipline is to investigate the points at which feminist, queer, and transgender theory intersect. Hale is the author of *Leatherdyke Boys and Their Daddies: How to Have Sex Without Women or Men.*

The City University of New York, meanwhile, will sponsor a conference this fall titled "Queer Middle Ages," dedicated to "queering" the medieval period, according to its website. Participants will document "the same-sex choices of women and men [in the Middle Ages] who resisted heteronormativity [*sic*] in their sexual and affective bonds." Sessions are being organized in "cross-dressing, homo-affectivity in German culture, modern queer appropriations, and queer Iberia."

Nor are these studies confined to North American campuses. Edge Hill University College in England will hold a conference called "RePulsions" that will focus on, according to an advertisement, "configurations of the abject," including "dismemberment, contemporary pulp magazines, smut, 'yuk' journalism, rupture/rapture, consumption/expulsion, profanity, sub/versions, spillage, corpse(d), ejaculation, incorporation/annihilation, fecal matters, bleeding, anality, viscera, surveillance/control, waste/disposal, and the milk of amnesia."

And finally, the first "World Pornography Conference" will be sponsored in August by California State University, Northridge. The program, as billed on the Internet, will include such topics as: "Visual and Carnal Pleasures in Hard-Core Pornography; Class Struggles: Pornography on Campus; No Limits: Necessary Danger in Male Porn; Beyond 'Looking for My Penis': Asian Queer Porn; Porn 101: Assimilating Pornographic Material into the College Classroom; Cyberspace and Interactive Sex; How a Family Planning Experiment Became a Sex Products Business; Bikini Science; Apes, Our Species, and Pornography; Child Pornography: Forbidden Thoughts and Images in

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an Erotic Landscape; Bathhouse 101 as a General Education Requirement; and My Buddha, My Love Guide: Kundalini Handballing in the New Age Sex Underground."

Surprisingly few people have been willing to speak out against this sexual radicalism. Partly it's because they feel intimidated. At one northeastern college, several students have complained of pressure so intense to engage in lesbian sex that, in the words of one of them, "I hardly know any longer if I have the *right* to be heterosexual." Karen Logan, a studio arts major at the University of California, Irvine, said about pedophile material displayed in class: "I am not so open-minded that my brain has fallen out. Depicting children as sex objects for adults is wrong and irresponsible." Afterwards, Logan was reportedly "shunned" by many faculty members. And in the aftermath of the SUNY-New Paltz conference, Pierre François, a professor emeritus, explained his recent retirement from the college as a response to an "ideological war."

Some students have banded together to fight the radicals, but more often than not they do so anonymously, ironic when you think what their opponents are willing to expose of themselves. When Professor Jane Gallop, of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, organized a conference in "lesbian pedagogy" proselytizing on behalf of "teacher-student sex," a group of students named Students Against Sexual Harassment called for a boycott and handed out leaflets, one of which read: "Do not allow yourselves to be co-opted into Jane's deluded world." At Rutgers University, after photos were exhibited of an artist ejaculating, students bluntly (albeit anonymously) criticized them in a column of a campus newspaper. As the author of the column, a 23-year-old senior, expressed the problem: "I'm sorry, but when did graphic nudity and bodily function become art?"

Unfortunately, there are many others, both within and without the educational establishment, who allow radicals to have their way. Lulled by the privilege of tenure and absorbed in their own narrow specialities, many older faculty members have simply withdrawn from the task of minding their own house. They avert their glance as their radical colleagues destroy academic content and rigor.

Faculty administrators, too, buckle in the face of sexual militancy. Defending the New Paltz conference in a television debate, Leon Botstein, president of Bard College, argued that the wider, pro-sex culture leaves colleges no choice but to sponsor such bizarre spectacles. Sex is after all ubiquitous in popular culture; for this reason students are curious about it, and so the university may not hold the line against conferences like "Revolting Behavior."

These administrators will also declare these celebrations of "non-heterosexist" lifestyles to be "educational." A committee at the University of California, Irvine, appointed to address objections to its course in the "aesthetics of pedophile art," found the course's "methods and materials... entirely consistent with the educational mission of the university."

Perhaps the real reason why colleges are so reluctant to confront sexual radicals, however, is because so many members of college boards have come to view their role predominantly as one of seeking more subsidies for their institutions. The job of trustees is to praise whatever happens on their campuses: better to be silent than draw attention to activities that might create controversy.

Indeed, many trustees never deal at all with academic matters, such as curriculum or admissions criteria. A trustee of a major public university system, who served on her board's academic affairs committee for many years, told me in private conversation that this panel dealt only with issues relating to student life or how to make faculty members' lives better. Of course it's true that trustees should not dictate course content or otherwise undermine the faculty's responsibility for making academic decisions—but they are also legally obligated to ensure that the institutions they serve meet basic curricular and other academic responsibilities. Teaching sadomasochistic sex to students is not one of them.

Campus sexual radicalism is also supported by certain philanthropic and public funding agencies, such as the Ford Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and state agencies that support the arts. Grants have financed a number of radical projects, including a Wesleyan freshmen orientation program which was described by one faculty member as a "four- or five-day boot camp" featuring "multicultural and homosexual propaganda." The NYU Queer Faculty Group thanked the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts for sponsoring its conference, "Queer Publics/Queer Privates."

Commenting on the New Paltz controversy, Robert Paquette, a history professor and department chairman at Hamilton College in upstate New York, observed that working people would be stunned by "how much money even little-known activist

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speakers and lewd performance artists are paid to do their thing on campus.

"These folks receive honoraria of $5,000, $10,000 and much more," he wrote in a letter to the *Wall Street Journal.* "Radical student groups and radicalized faculty programs here [who sponsor such events] sit on much bigger sums, which they can usually increase...by shrilly squeezing compliant administrators after discovering some slight that requires immediate campus-wide re-education."

The commercial sex trade is also profiting from these campus activities. The upcoming World Pornography Conference will feature producers, performers, and publishers of pornography. Among the companies currently scheduled to be represented at the conference are Feminist Pornography, Re-Visionary Press, and Internet providers of erotica such as Wicked Pictures and Blowfish.

So how is this debasement of our colleges to be reversed? Responsible faculty members, still by far in the majority, can overcome their more irresponsible colleagues if only they can win back the courage to do so. This means that they must refuse to sanction pseudo-scholarship, and tighten the processes of peer review. They must also exert more leadership in such campus bodies as the faculty senate and in their unions, which too often support the privileges enjoyed by academics while entirely ignoring the associated responsibilities.

But faculty members are divided into departments, and they can only with difficulty take steps to defend the overall academic integrity of their respective campuses. This task falls, rather, to campus presidents, who are in a position to lay down minimal academic standards for college conferences in order to ensure that campuses are not used as platforms for merchants of sex.

And there *are* steps that governing boards can take in order to ameliorate the decline of academic standards without overstepping their authority. Trustees can appoint chief executive officers (chancellors and presidents) who are more disposed to hold their institutions academically to account. They can regularly review these officers. Trustees can also put in place policies designed to measure and reward sound curricula and teaching, such as student achievement testing, financial incentives for reinstating broad general education, and financial rewards for good teachers and courageous administrators.

Alumni, parents, and taxpayers need to ask hard questions about the quality of higher education they are receiving for their billions of dollars in investment. The public would be well served by guides to colleges with a focus on "truth-in-labeling"—that is, guides which describe college achievements and problems in objective terms, and which identify campuses where education of the kind I have described exists. Displeased Duke University alumni contacted President Nan Keohane after the airing of the "60 Minutes" segment, which focused in part on gay and lesbian studies at Duke.

In the end what is saddest is not the presence of these radicals on campus, nor the influence they currently wield, but the fact that they usurp the brief, precious time which students have to claim their birthright: the trove of wisdom passed down through the millennia. ◆

Candace de Russy, Ph.D, is a trustee at the State University of New York.

"Diary" continued

producer decided was fit for young viewers. Pop music now pervades even "educational" videos for toddlers.

The parent who does not want to go thoughtlessly along with what every other adult seems to think is fine soon comes to feel like a bit of a freak, the NO FUN mum. And to go further—to attempt to get your children to appreciate serious music, or theater without special effects and blaring sound, or books not based upon cartoons or TV shows —inevitably becomes a Sisyphean struggle, like forcing them to eat peas and liver three times a day when everyone else is living on McDonald's.

Dr. Spock—you know, Mr. Permissive—did not think a child should watch any movie before the age of seven; he thought the experience too overwhelming to imaginations not yet able to distinguish between fantasy and reality. Yet I know kids younger than that who have already sat through the gory, terrifying spectacles of *Jurassic Park* and *Men in Black.* My kids wonder, fairly, why I won't let them see these films, too. They won't accept the true excuse—that they are too small, the movies too scary—because that suggests that I think *less* of them than other mothers do of their own children; that they are big 'fraidy-cats.

So I fall back on my new favorite word, one that has gone out of general use among parents. I tell them, simply, that those movies are "inappropriate." It's the same adjective I use for blue nail polish, shirts that expose the midriff, platform running shoes, "Macho Man," and rude jokes. My children grudgingly accept it. They don't know what the word means but it sounds sufficiently authoritative, and they have learned that once Mommy has uttered it, further argument is pointless.

I'm sure they also decide, as always, that Mommy is NO FUN. That's okay. I've concluded that motherhood is no job for the easily pushed around.

- Danielle Crittenden

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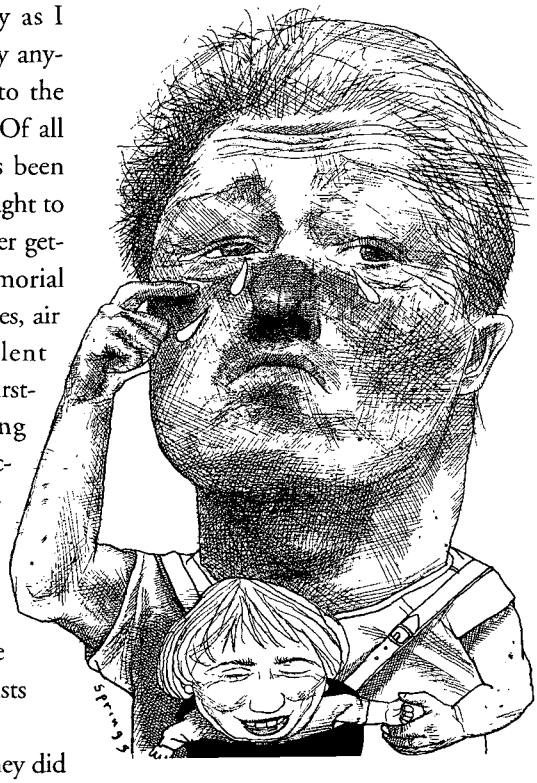
I Knew JFK and Clinton's No JFK

Taki on the President's womanizing

LIKE MANY PEOPLE, I am not entirely comfortable supporting Paula Jones as she presses ahead with her civil suit against the Draft Dodger. It is not that I do not believe her story. On the contrary, her account rings repellently true. Nor am I one of those conservatives awed by Judge Susan Webber Wright's legal insights. Her ruling that Paula Jones, in rejecting Clinton's sexual advances, had no reason to fear for her job, was simply idiotic. The first thing the Governor said to her was that he knew her boss.

No, my problem is that, try as I might, I do not want to do or say anything that might give credence to the concept of "sexual harassment." Of all feminist inventions, this one has been the most pernicious. For it has sought to prevent men and women from ever getting together. Since time immemorial secretaries have married their bosses, air stewardesses—or their equivalent before air travel—have married first-class passengers, young aspiring actresses have married film producers. Marriage was the most effective way of advancing socially for women. There was nothing whatsoever wrong with that. Everyone has to make the best use of his or her strengths. The feminists decided to do away with all that.

It was never clear to me why they did it. I guess it came from the usual lefty craving to arrogate to themselves the power to be the arbiters of the most basic of human exchanges. Henceforth, Gloria Steinem and her friends would determine what was and what was not an acceptable sexual union. If a vice-president's interest in the receptionist did not pass muster, there would be the courts to make sure that suitably harsh punishment was meted out to him.



Personally, it hasn't bothered me a bit. I have never, in forty-five years of pursuing the fairer sex, ever had anyone accuse me of boorish behavior. Anybody possessing the minimum of sensitivity knows when he's wanted. Despite what Don Giovanni believed, it takes two for a seduction to take place. The upshot, however, is that men today are terrified of making sexual advances to women. Can one blame them? To be routinely fired or demoted for "inappropriate" behavior must be a downer. Moreover, it has become socially unacceptable for men to be sexually aggressive. Just as in the past the kind of woman who tried to pick up men was regarded as a person of low standing, so a man today who is on the prowl for women is a figure of contempt.

OUTRAGEOUSLY, ESPECIALLY FOR a European like myself, it is women who are increasingly expected to make the first move. No man would dream of referring to a woman's physical attributes in terms as crude as women routinely use when speaking of men. Which brings me to the point I wish to make. Men now seem to be happy simply in being acceptable to women.

Among the young in particular, gabbing with the girls is the highest they aspire to. They have dropped almost everything traditionally associated with masculinity from their behavior. Reticence and responsibility are out, as is any interest in military history. Men are overjoyed to discover that they are as garrulous as women; that they can talk about their emotions as enthusiastically as women; that they are as absorbed with issues of self-esteem as women; that they cry as liberally as women; that they are obsessed with all manner of trivialities pertaining to clothes, hairstyles, and dating as women.

Needless to say, I deplore the arrival of the "new man," but I do not condemn men for having become so insipid. Men have taken the measure of the feminists and decided to get on board. They preoccupy themselves with

Drawing by John Springs

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Heads Up

Here are some other pills the makers of Viagra should consider

A THOUGHTFUL FRIEND forwarded these suggestions for a whole new line of drugs oriented towards improving the performance of men in today's society. We hope Pfizer will hop-to and get these babies on the market.

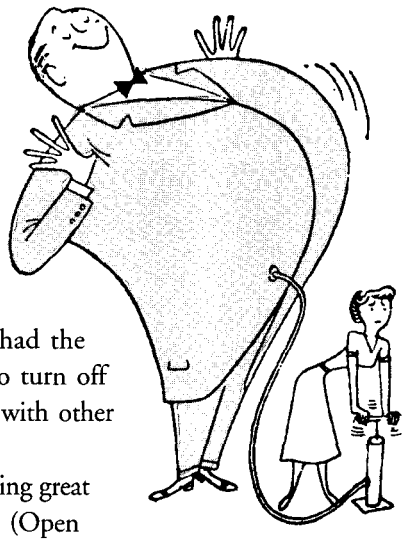
DIRECTRA – In trial tests, a dose of this drug given to men before leaving on car trips caused 72 percent of them to stop and ask directions when they got lost, compared to a control group of 0.2 percent.

PROJECTRA – Men given this experimental new drug were far more likely to actually finish a household repair project before starting a new one.

CHILDAGRA – Men taking this drug reported a sudden, overwhelming urge to perform more child-care tasks, especially cleaning up spills and "little" accidents.

COMPLIMENTRA – In clinical trials, 82 percent of middle-aged men administered this drug noticed that their wives had a new hairstyle. Currently being tested to see if its effects extend to noticing new clothing.

BUYAGRA – Married and otherwise attached men reported a sudden urge to buy their sweeties expensive jewelry and gifts after taking this drug for only two days. Still to be seen: whether the drug can be continued for a period longer than your favorite store's return policy.



NEGA-VIAGRA – Has the exact opposite effect of Viagra. Currently undergoing clinical trials on sitting U.S. Presidents.

NEGA-SPORTAGRA – This drug had the strange effect of making men want to turn off televised sports and actually converse with other family members.

FLYAGRA – This drug has been showing great promise in treating men with O.F.D. (Open Fly Disorder). Especially useful for men on Viagra.

PRYAGRA – Threatening to fail in its clinical trial, this drug gave men in the test group an irresistible urge to dig into the personal affairs of other people. Note: Apparent overdose turned three test subjects into "special prosecutors."

LIAGRA – This drug causes men to be less than truthful when being asked about their sexual affairs. Will be available in Regular, Grand Jury, and Presidential strength versions. ◆

"Token Man" continued

children, with their feelings, with their friends. Who needs ambition when one can get in touch with his inner self?

Yet masculinity has to express itself somehow, even if all the conventional attributes of manliness have been denigrated. If civilized forms of manliness are out, then barbarism will have to take their place. And this brings me back to the Draft Dodger. For he is the "new man" par excellence. He is the man who "feels your pain." He is the friend of the feminists. He is the man who is happy to surround himself with some of the least appealing specimens of womanhood since the harridans of Lysistrata. He visibly chokes up when he listens to the hoariest anecdote recounting feminine victimhood. Yet he is also a man who regularly behaves towards women in a manner too crude for a drunken sailor arriving in Tokyo Bay in 1945. He hauls women into his presence, drops his pants, and pleads for you-know-what.

SOME OF CLINTON'S defenders say that JFK got a free ride from the press. It is horse feathers. Some of JFK's conquests were known to yours truly. In fact once, at the Carlyle Hotel, he made a pass at a girl I was going out with. He tried the true method of seduction: charm. He stopped the moment she showed no interest. JFK felt sure enough of himself to try and charm women. Today women profess to be interested only in men's sexual attributes, not in their charm or intelligence. Is it any wonder, then, that Clinton is no JFK where women are concerned, and that his art of seduction amounts to nothing other than whipping out his member? ◆

Taki Theodoracopulos is a columnist for the Sunday Times *of London.*

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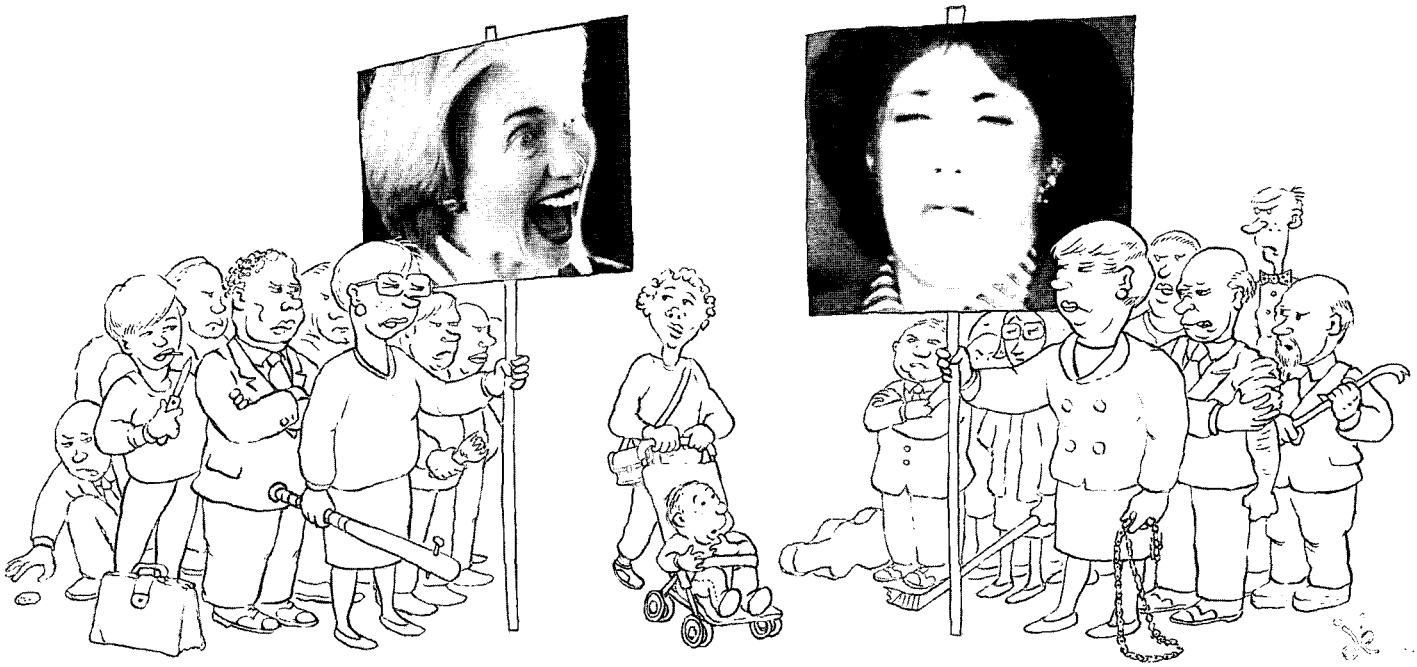
The GOP's Answer to Hillary

Don't count on Elizabeth Dole to woo women voters in 2000, warns *Kate O'Beirne*



ALL THE TALK in Washington about tapes, executive privilege, and impeachment must be making the political class nostalgic for the 1970s. At least that's my explanation for why Elizabeth Dole, a quintessential 1970s Republican feminist, is being encouraged to run for President in 2000.

Echoing a common theme, Hearst columnist Marianne Means believes that Mrs. Dole's candidacy would close the Republicans' gender gap, but wonders if the GOP has "the courage to be the first to put a woman at the top of a national ticket." Or in other words, can Republicans be even more courageous than Walter Mondale?

In fact, it is not courage but fear and confusion that are causing Republicans to talk about putting a woman on their ticket. They hope to appeal to women voters by engaging in bean-counting identity politics that is now outdated but perfectly suits Elizabeth Dole. Indeed Mrs. Dole is the figurehead for a generation of Republican women who dominate the party structure, but whose dearly held feminist convictions often conflict with its conservative constituency and the politics of younger Republican women.

Several years ago, I was the guest speaker at a D.C. Republican women's luncheon. In the midst of a general conversation about politics, a woman at my table declared, "After the Red Cross, Elizabeth is going to run." "In a marathon?" I dumbly wondered, before realizing that the White House was the intended finish line. Ever since, I have thought of my luncheon companions as "Liddy's Ladies."

Like Mrs. Dole, they tend to be white women with post-graduate training and no children—the demographic group whose members are most likely to call themselves feminists. The version of "Liddy's Ladies" with children include former Illinois Congresswoman and Bush Labor Secretary Lynn Martin, Maryland Congresswoman Connie Morella, and former Kansas Senator Nancy Kassebaum.

Unlike their more radical sisters in the Democratic party, however, these Republican feminists do not wander the halls of Congress breathing fire and hectoring their male colleagues; rather, they wear polished silk suits and have adopted the manners of the corporate boardroom where many of them had to prove themselves as the first generation of token female appointees. Yet like their Democratic sisters, they cut their teeth on the politics of the early 1970s and believe as fervently as Hillary Clinton or Patricia Ireland that women still get a raw deal in society, that the glass ceiling prevents women from rising in corporate America, and that female equality and advancement

Drawing by Charles Jaffé

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are strictly measured by how many women there are in Congress and on the Fortune 500 list. They supported the equal rights agenda in the 1970s when all the smart women they knew rallied to the cause, and believe in a woman's right to choose as fervently as another generation of Republican women subscribed to Episcopalianism. The only opponents of feminism that they can imagine are represented by Phyllis Schlafly—a housewife with six kids who wore shirtwaists and obsessed over co-ed bathrooms, for God's sake, while they rallied behind the ERA and *Roe* v. *Wade*.

Elizabeth Dole is their kind of woman, a busy half of a Washington power couple who has had a far more successful career-of-one's-own than Hillary Clinton. A graduate of the Harvard Law School class of '65, Mrs. Dole moved effortlessly from being a protégée of Betty Furness in the Johnson Administration to being a commissioner on Nixon's Federal Trade Commission. She served gracefully as head of two cabinet departments, first Transportation and then Labor.

During her jobs in government, Mrs. Dole engaged in the kind of identity politics and feminist fact-finding missions that would impress Donna Shalala. At the Reagan White House, she set up a Task Force on Legal Equity for Women, and promoted the feminist policy of "comparable worth," which would mandate that predominantly female professions provide the same wage as predominantly male occupations. As George Bush's Labor secretary, Mrs. Dole created a commission on the glass ceiling; its conclusion that the pay gap between men and women is a product of discrimination was widely discredited by economists. She is now the president of the Red Cross, an organization with a $2 billion budget, 30,000 employees, and 1.3 million volunteers who respond to some 60,000 disasters a year. Although Mrs. Dole dutifully took a break from her career to campaign for her husband in 1992 and 1996, she vowed to return to her job at the Red Cross should he be elected rather than serve as a traditional First Lady.

And this was in keeping with her thoroughly modern marriage. The Doles' hectic schedules rarely find them together. When the media would catch up with candidate Dole leaving his Watergate apartment for the campaign trail, he'd first have to stop to grab a cup of take-out coffee downstairs (leaving one to wonder, Why can't he get a cup of coffee in the home they've shared for over twenty years?). The couple famously had to schedule a meeting in order for Dole to inform his wife of his decision to retire from the Senate.

Pollster Kellyanne Fitzpatrick points out that women like Mrs. Dole, "who opted for disposable income rather than disposable diapers" saw themselves as pioneers who would advance the cause of women. They would be likely to vote for a woman for President in an "atta girl" gesture to one of their own who had made it. Trouble is, there aren't many of them. According to the latest polls, only twenty-six percent of all women consider themselves feminists. Today, women reject victimhood status and are joining the backlash against sex quotas. And in the GOP ranks, Mrs. Schlafly's courage and perseverance are now widely admired (they really did bring in co-ed bathrooms!). Republican feminists may be a well-bred breed, but they are a dying one.

When a national magazine poll a few years ago revealed that a majority of college-age women would rather "be hit by a truck than gain twenty pounds," it became clear beyond doubt that the feminist movement was on its last heavy legs. This is not quite what the feminists meant when they demanded the right "to control our own bodies." Young Republican women especially tend to be more conservative than their feminist Republican elders.

When the mainstream GOP group, Republican Network to Elect Women, brought younger (thirty- and forty-something) Republican women to Washington to meet with congressional leaders, the women complained about affirmative action in the workplace because it means "hard work is no longer rewarded." Roughly half of a recent gathering were self-employed and so supported tort reform to prevent sexual harassment suits that threaten their businesses. They also expressed the need to reduce the power of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. And three years ago, at the convention of the National Federation of Republican Women, conservative Senator Phil Gramm—who was deemed the presidential candidate least attractive to women in 1996—won the straw poll for favorite among the 1,000 delegates. (Gramm got 35 percent of votes to Bob Dole's 17 percent; Lamar Alexander finished second).

The old feminist belief that women vote for other women simply because they're women is not true. Between 1980 and 1990, women voted for Republican female candidates in only three of sixteen statewide races. They didn't vote for New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman, and they

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didn't vote for Geraldine Ferraro. Ronald Reagan carried forty-nine states and the women's vote in 1984 because he was a successful conservative President, despite having appointed Mrs. Dole to his Cabinet, who fought higher speed limits and mandated seatbelts and airbags.

Yet the GOP remains convinced that showcasing women will attract female voters to the party like a Nordstrom going-out-of-business sale. One example of the GOP's symbolism over substance is the list of Republican women trailblazers which the party offers as evidence of its hospitality to women: In 1920, Lenna Lowe Yost became the first woman tally clerk at a Republican National Convention; in 1928, Mabel Walker Willenbrandt was the first woman to serve as chairman of a convention committee. So why the heck didn't women vote for Bob Dole?

Activist Republican women are increasingly anti-feminist. They'll support politicians who think like them over ones who look like them. The Tennessee Federation of Republican Women provides a recent example. Following "Ladies' Day on the Hill" last April, they passed a resolution condemning "the feminist folly" of the military's same-sex training and co-ed barracks. These women are more concerned with military morale than with the self-esteem of careerist women who yearn to see one of their own in the White House.

Is Elizabeth Dole the candidate of modern women? Perhaps in the same sense that Margaret Thatcher once described the European super-state as modernist architecture: It is yesterday's vision of the future. ◆

Kate O'Beirne is Washington editor of National Review.

The Mommy Gap

What the GOP should really be paying attention to, says *Maggie Gallagher*

Ask any political consultant and he'll tell you: Republicans are desperately wooing women voters. And like all ardent suitors, they sometimes appear a bit touched in the head. How else do you explain as staunch a conservative as Lauch Faircloth demanding the inclusion of a woman in the national coinage lest women be slighted when they reach into their change purses? And though the GOP may be awkward swains, it's not hard to understand their current obsession.

Married mothers constitute almost exactly half the female population (counting those whose children are grown). Married moms under the age of forty-six account for almost one in four female voters, according to the Wirthlin Worldwide polling firm. No other demographic group among women comes close to having that much clout. The next largest group is older widows with (presumably mostly grown) children, about 12 percent of all women. Never married, childless women account for just 10 percent of potential female voters.

These married women, once reliable Reagan voters, have been steadily moving into the Democrats' camp. In 1984, Ronald Reagan got 59 percent of the married women's vote. In 1988, Bush pulled 54 percent of these women's votes. By 1992, Bush and Clinton split the married women's vote almost equally, with 41 percent to Bush and 40 percent to Clinton (and 19 percent to Perot). By 1996, according to exit polls, Clinton actually won over married women—48 percent to Dole's 43 percent (and 7 percent Perot).

Drawing by Charles Jaffé

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Republicans still do far better with married women than with single women. But Clinton has cut seriously into the GOP's once solid lock on them. And this is puzzling: Married moms constitute a strongly middle-class constituency. Why isn't an increasingly conservative GOP winning their vote hands down?

Part of the answer might be found in the "mommy wars." Career versus family is an issue that has certainly provoked acrimonious splits among women. Has it carried over into the political sphere? Do married mothers at home vote differently from married mothers who work?

Surprisingly little information on this topic is available in the public domain. Exit polls routinely ask marital status and age, but not work status and the presence of children. Moreover, most standard polling sizes are too small to allow meaningful comparisons within the married women's vote. Wirthlin Worldwide has created a huge merged data base with 123,000 responses, plenty large enough to subdivide the women's vote into any number of categories, but the question of work status was not asked frequently enough over enough years to allow any easy answer to how it affects women's voting habits. But if, as most analysts believe, women's votes are strongly influenced by practical help with personal concerns, there are results that may be helpful to politicians sleuthing for the married mommy vote.

In 1995, Wirthlin Worldwide senior research executive Cathy Chamberlain surveyed a large enough sample of Arizona women to take an in-depth look at the priorities of married homemakers versus those of married working mothers. Political consultants would do well to pay attention to the often subtle concerns that both groups share, even if on the surface the two groups appear to differ in many ways.

First, married moms at home full-time are considerably younger than married working moms (reflecting no doubt that mothers with older children are more likely to work). In the 1995 Arizona sample, 43 percent of homemakers were in their twenties and 50 percent were between the ages of thirty and forty-nine, while 72 percent of married working moms were boomers between the ages of thirty and forty-nine. A small percentage of the homemakers—17 percent—said they used to work but now stay home. Married working moms were slightly better educated on average than homemakers, but employed married moms were no more likely to be college graduates (16 percent) than married homemakers.

When it comes to priorities homemakers are, interestingly, more anxious about their kids than married working wives. While fully 100 percent of married homemakers said raising children was very important, just 75 percent described themselves as "very successful" in meeting this goal; almost as many married working moms saw children as "very important" (96 percent), but more working moms saw themselves as "very successful" at raising them (83 percent).

"Homemakers may have high expectations," suggests Chamberlain. Perhaps homemakers are at home because they worry more about raising children; or it may be that working moms have older children whose success in school or with friends validates their mothering, while the jury is still out for mothers of babies and toddlers. Or perhaps, as feminists have argued, the sense of competence fostered by paid work increases confidence in all areas of life.

Both sorts of moms report a big gap between their desire to "make time for a quality lifestyle" and their ability to achieve that goal. Not surprisingly, married working moms report the greatest time crunch: The gap between those who say time for a quality lifestyle is very important and those who say they've been very successful at achieving it, is 51 points for working moms versus 37 points for married homemakers. Time for a quality lifestyle is the biggest "failure" of married working moms, while for married homemakers the gap between the goals and expectations is biggest for "opportunities to make a difference": Seventy-nine percent of married homemakers say that's a "very important" priority but just 33 percent feel they are "very successful" at achieving it.

Not surprisingly, the battle of the sexes looms more prominently in the minds of married working moms than in those of the wives nagging their husbands from home. Some 61 percent of the working group say that men's attitudes and behavior continue to create obstacles for women. Still, even these women seem to be thinking of husbands more than bosses: Thirty-one percent say the biggest obstacle between men and women is an inability to communicate and 22 percent cite men's financial power over women. By comparison, just 41 percent of married homemakers say men's attitudes and behavior create obstacles for women, and 54 percent give men credit for removing barriers for women.

About the same majority of working moms and homemakers say they have never been discriminated against: 66 percent of homemakers versus 63 percent of married working moms. Of the minority who say they've experi-

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enced discrimination, a substantial chunk of both types of women said they had been passed over for promotion because of their sex. Weirdly enough, homemakers were more likely to say they had been victims of sexual harassment.

Chamberlain insists "the gender gap is a communications gap, not a policy dispute." Of course, that may be a reflection of the centrist agendas being pursued by both parties. When neither party emphasizes large partisan differences, women are unlikely to vote based on more obscure policy preferences.

One reason Bob Dole struggled for the married mom vote is that economic issues (economy, deficit, taxes, unemployment), which are the core of the agenda of the GOP conservatives, appeal to many more men than women. In 1996, for example, 30 percent of men versus just 19 percent of women listed an economic issue as the most important problem facing the United States today; yet 58 percent of women versus 47 percent of men named a social issue as their highest concern. "They respond to practical language about day-to-day concerns about raising [a] family, having more money for their families," says Karlyn Bowman, the American Enterprise Institute's public opinion expert [see "Poll Pourri" on page 18]. "A lot of Republicans don't speak that way at all. They may think they are but if you listen carefully, they talk about things like 'sunsetting the tax code' that are abstractions."

That may be why the Republicans have lately decided to push social tax cuts like the marriage penalty or education savings accounts. Although many fiscal conservatives dislike the idea, Americans do seem to be more enthusiastic about a tax cut that also serves important values than a tax cut that serves economic reasons alone.

So who will win over the fickle moms? The party that finds small, concrete strategies to help women balance family and career in ways that emphasize "time for a quality lifestyle" rather than an unrelenting work life is the party most likely to appeal to harried married moms, both working and at home. Such strategies, by emphasizing the value of family time, also appeal to status-anxious homemakers who want to see themselves as "making a difference" in the world.

Republicans should look for small-to-medium size policy proposals that point to ways government can relieve stress and strain upon women's lives. Here are three small suggestions to get the ball rolling:

1) Streamline tax regulations that frustrate home businesses. All moms, facing the tradeoffs between work and home, are tempted by the idea of solving their dilemmas by starting up their own small businesses. In Arizona, married working moms are more likely than most other groups in the Arizona survey to own their own businesses, and 63 percent of those who don't say they've considered the idea. More than two-thirds of married homemakers have considered owning their own businesses as well. Yet the federal government makes the lives of small-business owners difficult in many frustrating ways. For example, those who work at home have to file income taxes four times a year instead of once or face stiff penalties. Why not exempt small entrepreneurs—those who run day care in their homes, or do seamstress work, or write newsletters, and who have no employees—from the requirement to pay taxes quarterly?

2) Stop trying to make women narc on their babysitters. Congress passed legislation requiring people to provide the tax ID number of their day-care provider if they wished to take advantage of day-care tax credits. The day-care lobby supports this kind of micromanaging because it steers families into center-based care, where accountants handle tax issues. Not only does that put women in the uncomfortable position of ratting on their family day-care provider, but it also reduces the demand for informal day-care businesses that many homemakers think about starting up.

3) Instead, convert day-care tax credits into a new $1000-per-child preschooler benefit—and extend it to all families. Republicans proposed something like this as a response to Clinton's day-care subsidies. But why not go ahead and push it? Such a strategy highlights the fact that the Democrats' proposals are, at bottom, more pro-day care than pro-family: not only no homemakers, but no grandmas or papas who care for kids while Mom works need apply. Let the Democrats become the party of institutional child care while Republicans find ways to help all women struggling with work-family dilemmas.

In the end, the mommy wars are more apparent than real: Married working moms and married homemakers have more in common than the Sturm und Drang of the culture wars would have you believe. The presidential candidate who comes up with new ways to speak to those common concerns will reap a rich harvest of votes. ◆

Maggie Gallagher is a nationally syndicated columnist and an affiliate scholar at the Institute for American Values in New York City.

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TWQ's Political Makeover

PITY THE MALE politician. He finds it as difficult to attract the female vote as a science nerd does trying to cadge a date in high school. His handler's advice goes against instinct: He must not wear a suit. He must not use Tough Language. He must affect the expression of the late Princess of Wales meeting land-mine victims while talking about Social Security reform. Washington pollster *Kellyanne Fitzpatrick* and artist *Charles Jaffé* are here to help. Read it, boys, and by all means *weep*.

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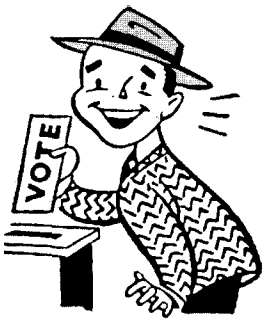
Poll Pourri

Incumbency, not discrimination, keeps good women down, observes *Karlyn Bowman*



In 1994, the National Women's Political Caucus published a comprehensive study on women candidates. The study got some attention at the time, but not as much as it deserved—possibly because it shattered some myths about women as candidates.

The author of the study, Jody Newman, created a massive data base that included all male and female candidates in House general election contests from 1972-1992, in U.S. Senate elections for the same period, and in gubernatorial races. Newman also looked at the 32,257 individuals who ran in general election contests for state house seats and 8,246 candidates who ran for state senate seats between 1986 and 1992. So what did Newman find?

Contrary to popular wisdom that women are less likely to win elections than men, Newman discovered that, "When women run for office, they win...as often as men do." Newman found no significant differences in the success rates for men and women in general elections. Looking specifically at her findings for House, Senate, and gubernatorial contests:

- In the House, incumbent women won 96 percent of their races, compared to 95 percent for incumbent men.
- Four percent of female challengers won House races, compared to 6 percent of men. Forty-eight percent of women running in the more competitive open seats won, compared to 51 percent of men.
- Though the number of women running for the Senate (fifty-three between 1972-1992) and governor (thirty-three during the same period) was small, Newman found no evidence that women were less likely than men to win these races, either.

When Newman updated her research in 1996, the story was the same. "The reason there aren't more women in elected office," Newman concluded, "is not that women have a tougher time winning elections than men, but that there have not been enough women running for winnable seats."

When women started entering the electoral fray in greater numbers in the early 1970s, most House, Senate, and governor's seats were held by men. Incumbents enjoy substantial political advantages, and it is extremely difficult for men—or women—to unseat them. In order to win more seats, more women will have to run, especially for seats where there is no incumbent and where the odds of success are much better.

Don't put your daughter on the dais, Mrs. Worthington

Perhaps because of the long association between politics and corruption, or perhaps because of the personal and financial toll politics takes, the pursuit of a political career has never been very attractive to most people—male or female. Since 1945, Gallup has asked people whether they would want a son to choose politics as a career, and each time the results have been overwhelmingly negative. In 1991, for the first time, Gallup asked the same question about a daughter going into politics. The results were virtually identical to those for men. Seventy percent said they would not want a daughter to embark on a political career (72 percent felt that way about a son), and 26 percent said they would like her to (versus 24 percent for sons).

He can lie fine—it's just all those subpeonas

Polls show that most Americans think their child could grow up to be President. In a handful of questions asked in the 1990s, however, around 60 percent have said that they would not want a child to seek the job.

Who is that blonde woman supporting the President?

In a June survey for *Time*, Yankelovich Partners asked women what they thought of feminist icon Gloria Steinem. Twenty-four percent said they had a favorable impression of Steinem, while 15 percent held an unfavorable one. Fully 56 percent of the women polled, however, said they were not familiar with her, and among 50 percent of self-described feminists said they were not familiar with her either. ◆

Karlyn Bowman is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

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When Policies Kill

Why are social service agencies determined to let murderers keep their children? asks *Susan Orr*

In July, an appeals court judge rendered one of those verdicts that causes sane people to wonder what sort of delirium has taken hold of the justice system. Latrena Pixley, who'd been found guilty of murdering her six-week-old daughter in 1992, won a custody battle for her two-year-old son, Cornilous.

The little boy had been in the care of Pixley's parole officer, Laura Blankman, while Pixley—whose other two children remain in foster care—served her minimal sentence for the cold-blooded murder of her baby: three-to-five years' probation that required her to spend weekends in a halfway house. According to evidence presented during the murder trial, Pixley had smothered her infant daughter, Nakya, and disposed of the body in a dumpster before going out for the evening with her boyfriend.

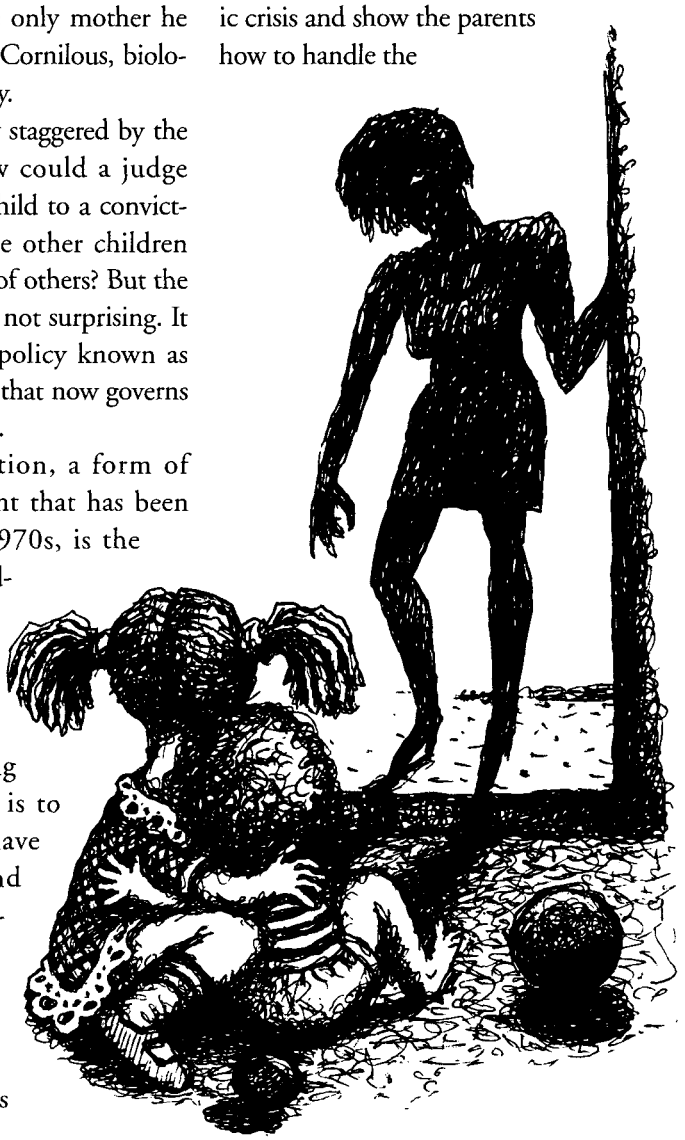
The judge, however, accepted her excuse that she was suffering from "post-partum depression" at the time of the killing, and let her off amazingly lightly (by contrast, when Pixley was found guilty of credit card fraud later that same year, she actually had to serve time in prison). She gave birth to Cornilous, her fourth child, in 1996, while still on probation. Because she could not keep him at the halfway house, Blankman offered to take him into her home at her own expense. Note this was a private offer: Social services did not see any pressing need to remove this new baby from his mother.

That's the wisdom a Maryland appellate court upheld. The judge ordered Blankman to return the boy to Pixley, despite the fact that Blankman wanted to keep caring for Cornilous and that she was the only mother he had ever known. For Cornilous, biology had become destiny.

Many were rightly staggered by the Pixley verdict: How could a judge award custody of a child to a convicted baby-killer, whose other children remained in the care of others? But the Pixley case is, in fact, not surprising. It is the product of a policy known as "family preservation" that now governs child welfare agencies.

Family preservation, a form of therapeutic treatment that has been around since the 1970s, is the benign name for a policy that can result in horrifying outcomes. For what sensible person could be against preserving families? Its object is to stop parents who have already abused and neglected their children from doing so again. But it often turns into a perverse system of protecting the custody of parents who have records of hideously abusive behavior including, as in Pixley's case, child murder.

Advocates of family preservation believe that a parent harms a child because of undue pressure from stressful situations, such as being poor or uneducated. No parent willingly chooses to do evil: If a social worker could only intervene to ease and, if possible, remove the stress, the parent would do the right thing. Hence child welfare services allow case-workers to make themselves available, sometimes twenty-four hours a day, to a limited number of families for a short time (from six weeks to six months), in an attempt to get the family over a specific crisis and show the parents how to handle the



Drawing by Yuri Kolyadenko

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stress without abusing or neglecting their children again.

In doing so, the worker will help organize every intimate detail of a family's life: teaching parenting skills; helping with the shopping, cleaning, and bill paying; providing transportation to appointments and counsel to family members. When intensive services are not provided, the theory surrounding family preservation still pervades day-to-day decisions about what to do with children in foster care: in short, keep them there for months, even years, until a parent has reformed. This utter faith in the benefits of therapy is what makes it possible for agencies to return a child to a mother like Latrena Pixley. As therapists assured the judge, Pixley was "over" the condition—post-partum depression—that caused her to kill her infant. She wasn't post-partum anymore—so why would she hurt little Cornilous?

The social workers' judgment, furthermore, is backed by enormous, and often arbitrary, state power, with the result that social service agencies now form among the most intrusive arms of government. Child welfare workers have the authority to intervene in domestic situations without a warrant, regardless of whether or not a crime has been committed. They have the power, in concert with cooperative courts, to separate parents from their children or, as it may be, to bring them back together. Child protective services can remove children from their homes when the agency determines a child is "at risk" of being harmed—but the definition of "at risk" is left largely up to the opinion of the social worker, upon whose judgment a judge heavily relies.

The upshot is that while the details surrounding cases of child abuse and neglect are always gruesome, what is more grotesque is the fact that children often remain in danger long after they are known to authorities. Instead, case workers are giving truly awful, violent parents second, third, and fourth chances to do right by their children.

Unfortunately for Cornilous Pixley and others, there is scant evidence to support the family-preservationist belief that giving parents these chances, sprinkled with counseling sessions and case-worker intervention, actually works. Those who trumpet the success of family preservation will cite lower foster care rates as a result of it. But this is not true.

Of course, if one chooses not to remove children from dangerous homes, and instead "treat" them in-house, then the number of children in foster care declines automatically. Social scientist Peter Rossi, of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, made himself unpopular in the world of child welfare experts by disputing the success of family preservation as being based upon flawed methodology. In his critical scholarly review of the policy, which was published in 1992 in *Children and Youth Services Review*, he cautioned evaluators to look at such factors as child safety and future rates of abuse as better measures of whether family preservation works. As well, Richard J. Gelles, director of the Family Violence Research Program at the University of Rhode Island, has observed that all rigorous studies of family intervention have failed to show that working intensively with parents for a short period of time has any effect on future abuse rates or future need for foster care.

If this kind of violence were not perpetrated on a person's biological offspring, it would land that person in jail for assault. But common sense is often overridden by faddish theories, especially when helped along with large infusions of federal cash. We now have upwards of 500,000 children lingering in foster care as a testament to the therapeutic regimen. These are children who cannot remain at home without risk to their safety, but who have not been cleared for adoption. In an attempt to redress foster-care drift, Congress passed the Adoption and Safe Families Act last year. Granted, the law tightens up language surrounding what constitutes reasonable efforts at keeping families together, and adds incentives to states to expedite adoptions. But, as Gelles notes, "Even with this new law, there will be problems because child welfare advocates lack the desire and the wherewithal to implement the reforms."

These advocates do not want to abandon the family preservation model, nor do they have to, thanks to Congress. In 1993, under the Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Act, Congress gave the Clinton administration $930 million in new funding for states to implement family support and family preservation services over the next five years. The administration heralded the funding as one of its crowning achievements, and indeed it was. It was the first federal infusion of money into the child welfare system in almost twenty years. Last year, Congress reauthorized funding for another five years.

Child advocates, who actively lobbied for the reauthorization, seduced Congress into thinking that family preservation was family-friendly. How many more dead Pixleys will it take to persuade Congress otherwise? ◆

Susan Orr is director of the Center for Social Policy at the Reason Public Policy Institute.

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Correspondence

Who would have thought, in 1998, that you could run a cover about smart, professional, ambitious young women deciding to chuck it all for suburbs and kids, and no one would blink an eye? (Well, one person blinked an eye. See Miss Puente, of Arlington, Virginia below.) Quite the opposite: Response to the spring TWQ—and its defense of accommodating career to family—was positively gushing, and possibly the largest we've ever received. Chatting it up on radio stations across the country, our writers were often startled by how many women—working mothers and non-working mothers alike—phoned in to express their agreement. But maybe we shouldn't have been so startled. The polls show a strong public antipathy toward day care and an equally strong desire among women to raise their children themselves. Now if only politicians would listen.

As always, we love to hear from you (even when you disagree!). If you send us e-mail (iwf@iwf.org), please remember to include your city and state—or country, if necessary—so we have some idea how far flung in cyberspace you are (TWQ now has readers in England, Alaska, Canada, Chile, and Australia). You can also fax us at 703/558-4994, or send your letter the old-fashioned way to our new address, c/o the Editor, The Women's Quarterly, P.O. Box 3058, Arlington, Virginia 22203-0058.

A reader gripes

I just finished reading the spring issue and its many paeans to the joys of motherhood. I think it's wonderful you girls want to stay home and take care of your kids. At the very least it means we (the taxpayers) won't have to pay to take care of them, and it might help ensure they won't grow up to be murderers and

rapists and parasites on society.

Still, I can't understand the defensive, self-pitying tone of these articles. What's the problem, girls?

You don't have to fight traffic, deal with office politics, fight for equal pay and respect, placate idiotic, insipid, insensitive, or incompetent bosses and co-workers, or search for a place to park. You get to stay home and be with baby, putter around the house, go shopping, read, take in a museum, garden, paint, cook, work out, eat or sleep all day if you want, while hubby brings home the bacon. If he brings home enough, you can even hire a gardener or housekeeper to do all the heavy lifting. You've got it made—and you're still whining?

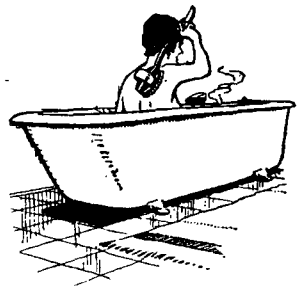
Could it be that you can't feel truly happy and blessed unless every mother makes the same choices? You're smart enough to know that isn't going to happen, girls. You're not going to put that toothpaste back in the tube. You should be the most contented moms in the country, yet these self-righteous screeds leave the impression that you can't feel good about your lives unless you're making working mothers feel bad. As the nuns used to say, "That's not very nice, girls."

MARIA PUENTE
Arlington, Virginia

Come all ye faithful

Oh joy, as I opened my mailbox and spied my latest copy of TWQ. Once again, its incomparable writers (my hero, Danielle Crittenden) have skewered the dour feministas with facts. Once again it has taken on a central issue of our day and given a reasoned and intelligent synopsis of The Truth. Women DO want to stay home with their babies and young children—most of my friends and acquaintances work part-time or run home-based businesses. The feminists fail to recognize this. They do not speak for us, but the Independent Women's Forum does. Thanks!

JENNIFER KING
The Women's SCUBA Association
[via e-mail]



We enjoy being in hot water, too

Thanks very much for your great issue on day care, working women, housewives, etc. I'm a forty-three-year-old housewife/education reformer/ex-liberal with four sisters and a discarded career of my own. I have many concerns about the emotional state of many of the children I've seen from homes of all income levels. I read the spring TWQ from cover to cover in the bathtub, which required the addition of hot water every once in a while. It was heaven.

SUSAN O'DONNELL
Berkeley, California

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Post-partum concessions

I UNDERSTOOD DANIELLE Crittenden's observation that "for six or eight years, [the average American woman] will be a mother to very young children." Staying home with my young children, deferring graduate education, and returning to full-time work, was my plan when I became pregnant for the first time. My daughter's birth changed all that, and more, in one instant. Though my other children have grown up, I am still a stay-at-home mom, learning independently and working part time, on a schedule set by my daughter's needs.

MARILYN ELSON
Niskayuna, New York

Young pioneers

THE DAY-CARE centers described in "You Are Not My Kid's Mom," by Diane Fisher, closely resemble socialist and communist "schooling" and day care for working mothers (who were not professionals but ordinary manual laborers). I leave the writing to you, but this subtle, Orwellian, let's-impose-our-values-on-other-people's-children, ought to be exposed for what it is.

GIVON ZIRKIND
[via e-mail]

We'll send you another

IT SO ENCOURAGES me, thanks to the IWF's publications and its now constant presence in the media, to know that I am not alone. It encourages me to know that stories like the one on the front page of the May 29 *Washington Post* ("Keeping an Electronic Eye on the Kids," about cameras in day-care centers that parents can access on the Internet) are being read with absolute disgust by other women. I loaned out my Summer 1997 issue, with the article "Bulimic Barbie" by Rondi Adamson, so many times that I lost it. That was, hands down, the funniest article I have ever seen in print (apologies to Dave Barry).

What can I say? Keep it up—you guys are my sanity-savers.

CATHERINE M. MALINOWSKI
McLean, Virginia

Just so long as you didn't leave lipstick marks

YOUR SPRING ISSUE was sent to the attention of the president's wife of the association where I am employed. Because I work for the president, it came across my desk. The cover story caught my eye and I was compelled to read the ensuing articles—I was hooked. I read the entire magazine from cover-to-cover in one sitting. I couldn't put it down!

SABRINA STEVENS
[via e-mail]

You're welcome at our table

THANK YOU SO much for Melinda Ledden Sidak's article, "Not At My Table," (Autumn 1997). As a woman in her sixties, I have been increasingly distressed by the societal destructiveness of the feminist movement as the years have gone by. When I happened upon TWQ in 1996, I could hardly contain my joy in discovering a group of intelligent, thoughtful women who seemed to be thinking about issues instead of just spouting the conventional spin of either the far right or the far left; women who seemed to be willing to look at their own behavior and to try to see what had worked and what had not worked.

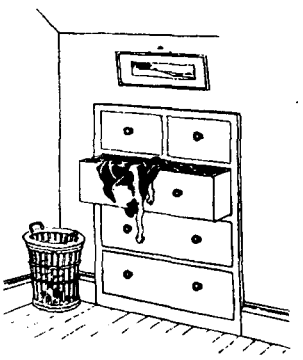
I do encounter, here and there, a dawning recognition of the devastating direction this country is headed, but I am unable to understand how it is possible to reverse the direction. I delight in the connection I feel when I read each issue of TWQ. And in spite of my pessimism, I do want to thank Sidak for lifting my spirits for a brief time as I read her article.

LYNN PIERCE
Ramona, California

Maybe it's the company she keeps

YOU GO FROM triumph to triumph. Yours is a victory for common sense. Men can't be women and vice versa. God decreed this from the beginning and it remains a mystery to me why anybody would want to change his (her, its) sex. I read every copy of TWQ with a feeling of, How can Patricia Ireland entertain the bizarre ideas she does?

SAMUEL MILLER
Roslindale, Maryland



Domestic litigation

I'VE BEEN A "stay-at-home attorney" for the last sixteen years—the best years of my life, my kids' lives, and my beloved husband's life. Someone is fighting back against the B.S. of day care. Thanks!

JILL ROSENFELD
State College, Pennsylvania

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One last observation . . .

The Immaculate Birthday

A leaf from *Bridget Jones's Diary*, in which our British heroine refuses to accept her face. By *Helen Fielding*

Wednesday 15 March
9 STONE, ALCOHOL UNITS 5 (disgrace: urine of Satan), cigarettes 14 (weed of Satan—will give up on birthday), calories 1795.

HUMPH. HAVE WOKEN up v. fed up. On top of everything, only two weeks to go until birthday, when will have to face up to the fact that another entire year has gone by, during which everyone else except me has mutated into Smug Married, having children plop, plop, plop, left right and center and making hundreds of thousands of pounds and inroads into very hub of establishment, while I career rudderless and boyfriendless through dysfunctional relationships and professional stagnation.

Find self constantly scanning face in mirror for wrinkles and frantically reading *Hello!*, checking out everyone's ages in desperate search for role models (Jane Seymour is forty-two!), fighting long-impacted fear that one day in your thirties you will suddenly, without warning, grow a big fat crimplene dress, shopping bag, tight perm, and face collapsing in manner of movie special-effect, and that will be it. Try to concentrate hard on Joanna Lumley and Susan Sarandon.

Also worried about how to celebrate birthday. Size of flat and bank balance prohibit actual party. Maybe dinner party? But then would have to spend birthday slaving and would hate all guests on arrival. Could all go out for meal but then feel guilty asking everyone to pay, selfishly presuming to force costly and dull evening on others merely to celebrate own birthday—yet cannot afford to pay for everyone. Oh God. What to do? Wish had not been born but immaculately burst into being in similar, though not identical, manner to Jesus, then would not have had to have birthday. Sympathize with Jesus in sense of embarrassment he must, and perhaps should, feel over two-millennium-old social imposition of own birthday on large areas of globe.

MIDNIGHT. HAVE HAD v.g. idea about birthday. Am going to ask everyone round for cocktails, perhaps Manhattans. Will then have given to guests something in manner of grand society hostess, and if everyone wishes to go to dinner afterwards: why, they may do so. Not sure what Manhattan is, come to think of it. But could buy book of cocktails maybe. Probably won't, to be perfectly honest. ◆

Excerpted from Bridget Jones's Diary *by Helen Fielding. © Helen Fielding 1996. Reprinted by arrangement with Viking Penguin, a division of Putnam Inc. To order a copy of the novel, please call 1-800-253-6476.*

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FOR THE PAST six years, the Independent Women's Forum has been taking on the old establishment of feminist organizations—and winning. "The IWF has a profile almost unheard of for a group that is the new kid on the block," writes the *Boston Globe*. "In the marketplace of ideas, from the national news media all the way down to local radio, the IWF has shown its real strength....[The] IWF is well on its way to becoming the foremost media nemesis of the feminist movement."

"*Dangerous.*"

– Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women, on the IWF

Why has the IWF been so successful? Because the women who make up the IWF are not radical ideologues—they're businesswomen, economists, lawyers, truck drivers, and also mothers. Because the IWF promotes individual responsibility, strong families, limited government, and opportunity—policies that help *all* Americans. Because the IWF, a nonpartisan, nonprofit Washington organization, sponsors speaker events and conferences noted for their provocative and free-ranging debates. And because the IWF publishes *The Women's Quarterly*—an intellectual antidote to *Ms.*—which syndicated columnist Mona Charen praises as, "My type of women's magazine! With humor and sarcasm but also with warmth and passion, these women offer an intelligent refutation of the leading feminist nonsense that is swallowed so uncritically by the mainstream press."

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The Women's Quarterly

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